

REMARKS

In the Second/Final Office Action, the Examiner maintained the rejection of claims 1, 12-21, 23-27, and 32 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Weigand (US 5,837,903). The Examiner rejected claims 4, 7, 8, 22, 29-31, and 35 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Weigand '903. The Examiner objected to claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 9-11, 28, 33, and 34 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but indicated they would be allowable if appropriately rewritten.

Reconsideration and re-examination of the application as amended considering the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Telephone Interview

The courtesy extended by the Examiner in conducting a telephone interview on March 2, 2002 is appreciated. As discussed with the Examiner and described at length in the arguments of record, Applicants' screen is distinguishable from a laminar flow element (LFE) disclosed by Weigand '903 in that it is thin in the longitudinal flow direction, which provides various advantages with respect to condensation formation, thermal capacity, weight, etc. While Applicants' respectfully submit that the plain meaning of "screen" without any description, and certainly as described and illustrated in Applicants' disclosure distinguishes over the reference relied on by the Examiner, Applicants agreed to amend the claims as indicated in this response to more particularly point out the invention and advance prosecution. The Examiner's suggestions in selecting appropriate claim language in this regard are appreciated.

Rejections Under 35 USC §§102(b)/103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 12-21, 23-27, and 32 under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Weigand (US 5,837,903), and claims 4, 7, 8, 22, 29-31, and 35 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Weigand. Applicants respectfully disagree and traverse the Examiner's rejection for the reasons of record and incorporated by reference here.

Briefly restated, Weigand '903 discloses measuring a pressure difference across a ceramic laminar flow element (LFE) while Applicants' invention as disclosed and claimed measures a pressure difference across a disk-shaped flow restricting element or stranded mesh screen, both of which are relatively thin or have limited longitudinal dimension in the direction of gas flow. This provides a number of advantages relative to the use of a laminar flow element including lower thermal mass, reduced/eliminated condensation, lighter weight, etc. as described in Applicants' specification. As such, Applicants' invention is patentably distinguishable over Weigand '903 and Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection under 35 USC §102/103

Summary

Applicants have made a genuine effort to respond to the Examiner's rejections to advance prosecution of this application. Applicants respectfully submit that all formal and substantive requirements for patentability have been met and that this case is in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

No additional fee is believed to be due. However, please apply any fees or credits incurred as a result of filing this Amendment to Deposit Account 06-1510 (Ford Global Technologies, LLC) as authorized by the original transmittal letter in this application. If there are insufficient funds in this account, please charge the fees to Deposit Account No.06-1505.

Respectfully submitted:



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